

*The Obligation of doing as we would be done by,
recommended from the Consideration of its ex-
cellency, in creating Peace in the Mind, and
establisbing Happines among all Communities
of Men.*

A
S E R M O N

Preached in the

P A R I S H C H U R C H

O F

St. ANDREW, HOLBORN,

On *January* the 30th, 1755.

B E I N G

The Day appointed to be observed as the An-
niversary of the MARTYRDOM

O F

King CHARLES the First.

By T H O M A S S M I T H,
One of the CURATES of the said Parish.

The SECOND EDITION.

L O N D O N:

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Little Kirby-Street, near *Hatton-Garden*. 1755.

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TO THE
Rev^d Mr. BARTON,

Rector of St. ANDREW, Holborn,
AND

Chaplain to Her Royal Highness the
PRINCESS of WALES.

Rev^d SIR,

THIS Sermon, published at the request of several persons who heard it, is, with the utmost deference, submitted to your judgment. This I do the more willingly, as knowing that you are neither apt to find fault, nor hasty in censuring any performance, which you have reason to believe well intended. Give me leave, Sir, to assure you, that my intention was such, and, I hope, that this will be admitted as an excuse for any imperfection in the discourse.

Here, I might justly expatiate on the many eminent virtues with which you are endued, such as tenderness and compassion for the unfortunate, and readiness to help all who stand in

any need of assistance. But I forbear ; knowing that minds like yours, feel more pleasure in doing good actions, than in hearing encomiums on them. However, I, who have had such great experience of your candour and generosity, cannot, without being guilty of the breach of Gratitude, pass over in silence, the repeated favours which you have so bountifully bestowed on me, since I have had the honour to assist you in the ministry. I am,

Reverend S I R,

With the most real and unfeigned regard,

Your most obliged, and most faithful humble servant,

THOMAS SMITH.

In a few Days will be published, by the Rev. Mr. SMITH,

THE great Duty of Contentment and Resignation to the Will of God, wherein is shewn the Way to attain such a Temper of Mind, as will make us happy in the worst Circumstances we may possibly fall into. The Third Edition; corrected and very much enlarged by the Author.

N. B. *This Book has met with such a favourable Reception in the World, that within a Year and a Half Two Impressions have been intirely sold off.*



MATT. vii. 12.

*Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you,
do ye even so to them, for this is the law
and the prophets.*

THIS rule of doing to others as we would they should do to us, is so reasonable and just in its self, that unless men are vitiated, through the prevailing power of self-love, or prejudiced in favour of some avaricious or darling passion, they must readily consent to the equitableness of this duty, and without any doubts or scruples immediately set about the performance of it. This benevolent precept of our blessed Saviour is wrote in every man's breast, is so plain and legible, that it needs no comment, nor wants any other interpreter than his own pressing exigencies and continual necessities to explain and inforce the obligation. Moreover, this rule of equity is founded on the immutable law of Justice, which is the supreme virtue of human life and most resplendent glory of our intellectual nature, and comes up gradually to resemble, in a degree, the glorious attributes of the Deity; by it we are commanded to do what reason requires, and omit no duty that it enjoins; for
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then we shall be enabled to practise both our civil and domestic concerns with peace, tranquillity, and applause. Acting as we ought, in these different stations of life, we shall procure the approbation of all with whom we have to do, and be able to maintain a good understanding among men.

The dealing by one another as this law of right directs, will procure such a delightful harmony among rational and intelligent beings as will recommend us to the unerring Distributer of all things, and make us acceptable to the supreme Lord of universal nature, who governs the world in righteousness, and will finally administer the laws of truth with equity and impartiality : So that, according to the opinion of our Divine Legislator, he only should be reputed truly religious who is the most righteous, for christian righteousness is not to be measured by the rigour of the law, but by that general rule of equity delivered by the just and merciful Redeemer of the world, *whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets* ; that is, true christian love and benevolence is not confined to those of our own party, nor restrained to the narrow limits of our family, but is communicative and also disinterested and free, without any guile or selfish views or advantageous designs, by serving others to serve ourselves ; therefore, if we would act agreeably to the gospel scheme, and the generous example of our munifi-

munificent Master, we must do good to all, it matters not to whom, whether they are members of the same church, or of a contrary persuasion: be their differences what they will, they are men made after the similitude of God, and ransomed with the precious blood of Christ; for which reasons they are objects of our regard, and we ought not to withhold any necessities from them that we can conveniently spare, but render to every man his just due, and so to order and proportion our charity as right reason shall direct and require. Had this rule been strictly observed, all that bigotry and superstition, all those horrid rebellions and barbarous massacres, which have stained the christian world with blood, would have been entirely prevented, and we should have had no occasion to commemorate the mournful tragedy which was acted on this day, by wicked and blood-thirsty men, whom nothing would satisfy but to imbrue their hands in the blood of their lawful sovereign, and the utter destruction of monarchy; but lest I should create disturbance in the breast of any one in this audience, by relating the detestable fact, I willingly draw a veil over the cruel and inhuman action, and proceed to shew, that it is wholly owing to our breaking in upon this unalterable law of right, and a disregard to those divine principles which the God of nature has engraven on our souls, that this world

world is become the seat of anarchy and confusion.

All mankind are endued with a principle of reason and understanding by the benevolent Author of their beings, which will, by reflection, enable them to discern the beauty of doing what is right, and acquaint them with the pleasure and satisfaction that must necessarily follow the constant and faithful discharge of it. This rule of truth and equity is of so extensive a nature, that it descends from the throne to the cottage. It binds the prince to protect his subjects, and keeps him from encroaching upon the liberties of his people. It secures the subject in obedience to his prince, and makes him steadily to persevere in his allegiance.

This rule of action does not only adjust and settle our deportment towards one another, but it so prompts us to the exercise of the several duties we owe to ourselves and our neighbour, that the violation of it must unavoidably disturb the beautiful order of nature, subvert the being of society, and change this stage of life into a theatre of strife and contention; by which means no one will be able to keep his just rights, or preserve his legal property any longer than till another has it in his power to oppress him, or an opportunity by art to force from him what he had a lawful right to detain. Thus, through our continual acting in opposition to the principles of true religion, we must of
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consequence destroy God's moral government, and make this world a scene of fraud and oppression, a true representation of war and bloodshed, where we should behold all that good order and delightful harmony which had subsisted among understanding creatures, torn up by civil feuds, intestine heats, and continual dissensions. This must greatly grieve the humane heart, and sensibly afflict the benign peaceable soul, to see the inhabitants, of a once well regulated kingdom, become intire strangers to the practice of righteousness, and utterly unacquainted with that tenderness and compassion which we ought to have for one another. By means of these continual tumults men divest themselves of humanity, grow unconcerned for the loss of those invaluable blessings of peace and happiness, which were enjoyed in times past, by observing the laws of Justice and Equity.

Men, by abusing the powers of their souls, and perverting the faculties of their bodies, are so intensively busied in the service of iniquity, that they cannot hearken to the powerful commands of truth. And though these faculties were bestowed upon them by the beneficent Parent of the universe, to the intent that they should be employed as instruments to promote sobriety and temperance here, and used as means to prepare us for that state of perfect bliss and concord which exists eternally in the glorious realms of futurity; yet, they are industriously employed

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to support the cause of iniquity, and carry on the most pernicious designs. These things must be vastly displeasing to a truly rational mind, and very offensive to God ; whose delight is only among such as live in unity, peace, and love, and in the constant exercise of all moral and social virtues.

From what has been said, we may be thoroughly convinced of the dreadful mischief which ensues when men depart from the law of reason ; and that all the wickedness in the world, must be entirely ascribed to our not keeping the sensitive appetites under the power thereof. Moreover, we frequently feel the sad effects of granting our wild passions an illegal gratification ; because they commonly distract the soul, and put furious creatures upon such desperate projects to obtain their insatiable desires, as often makes the human species sensible of its terrible consequences : therefore we should be very assiduous in suppressing our exorbitant appetites, and use all possible methods to reduce them to obedience, lest they should get the ascendent over our intellectual faculties, and dethrone the noble principles of reason ; for when men have got loose from the government of truth, they think themselves under no obligation to obey its faithful admonitions ; but are at liberty to do whatever their sinful lusts require, without paying any regard to the secret reproofs of conscience.

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When the passions of men are once inflamed, they care not what acts of violence they commit; nor do revengeful spirits heed how outrageously they behave towards their fellow creatures, if bent upon pursuing their envious intentions: then they rush forward, like the horse into the battle, not regarding either age or sex, quality or rank, but trample on all before them. So it is with a furious man, he makes no difference between the virtuous and prophane, nor pays any more respect to persons of the highest dignity, than to those in the lowest station; if he can but discharge his malice upon the objects of his wrath, he values not how cruel or inhuman the means are to obtain it. And though his barbarity does not always terminate in the ruin of such only as are the mark of his angry resentment; yet, he is resolved upon executing his direful displeasure, even at the expence and hazard of his own life.

These calamitous circumstances men are frequently plunged into, by not submitting to the forcible power of Justice and Equity. Likewise, all that disorder introduced into the mind, is occasioned by the working of tumultuous passions, and their rejecting the unerring reports of truth, which is always ready to assist and instruct mankind in every thing that makes for their peace and tranquillity. From this source arises contempt of the majesty of God. The want of reverence for the sacred laws of the Deity, and these

wicked resolutions of not hearkening to, and obeying of, the divine commands. All which evils are the result of a disobedient and rebellious mind. This is the spring from whence proceed blasphemy and impiety, lying and perjury, together with that unnatural enmity which is too often carried on, in private families, to the destruction not only of those in being, but also the ruin of their posterity. It is for want of attending to, and complying with, the unerring injunctions of truth, that ambitious princes commonly engage in war, and cruel tyrants, thro' disregarding its equitable precepts, are encouraged to encounter the most barbarous enterprizes. The neglecting to observe this sacred director, is the cause that imperious emperors have made such vast slaughter among men; that public communities and kingdoms have been depopulated, and the most beautiful and wealthy provinces reduced to so low a condition, that the small number of inhabitants left were never able to recover their riches, or support their former glory.

Reason is the brightest perfection of the Deity, and chiefest excellency of the rational soul; by this divine principle we are taught to exercise Justice and Equity; but if once this ray of the divinity in man is disarmed of its power, then its authority is slighted and despised, and the criminal takes the liberty to indulge his vicious inclinations, without
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ever limiting the vehement desires of nature. Thus he continues to humour his boisterous passions, not considering the mischief that will inevitably follow their not being subject to the sacred direction of truth, by which means he becomes so insensible of shame and modesty, that he breaks through the bonds of human society, bears down all before him, and does as much, as in him lies, change the tribes of intelligent beings into herds of brutal creatures. When men have thus violently broke through the rules of rectitude, they involve themselves in the utmost misery, and, like beasts of prey, do bite and devour one another; so that this world, which was designed for a habitation of righteousness, is, by contumacious offenders, turned into a wilderness of wild, desperate savages, where neither the rights of God, nor the properties of men, can be secured from the insolence of those sons of cruelty and blood-thirsty libertines, who no more regard the lives of their fellow creatures, than do so many Cannibals.

Long indulged habits of sin, enervate the ideas of virtue, blind our understanding, and prejudice our judgment in favour of vice, to such a degree, that we become incapable of rightly using our rational faculties. This should caution us against complying with any thing that is evil, lest our precipitant wills hurry us into the intricate mazes of error, and we become familiar with the destructive power of iniquity. When men have gained

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an intimacy with the enemies of truth, they are often so corrupted with their poisonous instructions, that the most moving entreaties are not sufficient to divert them from putting those noxious principles in execution. If men are inflexibly bent upon pursuing wicked practices, the strongest arguments lose their weight and efficacy, nor will the most powerful reasoning alter their pernicious determinations: if they can accomplish their horrid designs, they value not how much they disturb the quiet and happiness of mankind.

Moreover, it is men's fond attachment to evil maxims, that causes them to lose all sense of their duty, and puts ambitious creatures upon searching after such devices as are most likely to obtain their malignant desires. Such persons too frequently involve themselves and their posterity in the utmost extremity and distraction. And though I am very far from supposing, that all those who contributed towards bringing on, and promoting the troubles of *Charles* the First, did, at the beginning of those troubles, act from any such evil principles, or intended to destroy the king, or make this nation the seat of war and oppression: yet, its greatly to be feared, by what followed, that the actions of the general part proceeded from no other views, than their own private interest and advancement to power. Because, had honour and honesty, the good of their country, and advantage

vantage of their fellow creatures, been the prevailing spring of action, they must have produced quite different effects from what they did. For reason teaches, that the matter is so ordered by the wisdom of providence in the ordinary course of things, that virtuous principles do produce good actions, and vicious principles are the sources of evil actions; this truth both reason and experience does abundantly confirm. Therefore, let us strictly adhere to the practice of moral virtue, and never deviate from the rules of unalterable rectitude, but live in constant obedience to the profitable injunctions of our rational powers: because these immutable rules are the same at all times, and in all places; and we can no more change the relation we bear to God and one another, than we can overturn or alter the constitution and natural order of the physical and moral system. Besides, there is nothing in this world can make us absolutely miserable, except acting contrary to the order of the universe, and indulging perverse dispositions; neither is there any thing that can make us truly happy, but the continual observation of rational truths, and the exercise of such duties as infinite wisdom has appointed, to enforce the obligation of them. The steady observance of those rules, will preserve that delightful harmony of love and good-will, which ought to subsist among reasonable beings, and we shall experience the benefits of those invaluable

valuable blessings to our inexpressible satisfaction and comfort.

We must not permit our jarring passions to invade the dominion of reason, lest they should raise a mutiny in the mind and suppress its divine authority. Did men but experimentally feel the satisfactory pleasure of doing what is right, they would never be prevailed on to do any thing that is wrong. Our faithful adherence to the dictates of reason, and the constant exercise of true religion, will create a divine harmony in the soul, and preserve such an awful sense of the majesty of God, as will dispose us at all times readily to comply with, and heartily conform to the rule of *doing to others as we would they should do to us*. By these means the honour of the Deity is best vindicated, and the authority of his laws secured from contempt: The dignity of human nature is most strongly supported, and the good government of society is fixed on its stable foundation. This rule of equity so immoveably settles all mankind in their civil and religious rights, that the gratification of depraved appetites will never be able to deprive them of their blessed privileges, nor powerful enough to divert them from obeying the commands of their righteous Lawgiver, and divine Instructor.

If men desire to be happy, they must forsake their transgressions, change the corrupt inclinations of the heart, and live in constant
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subjection to the will of the all comprehending mind. This will restore the order of nature to its beauty, prevent us from falling into many destructive vices, and be an expedient to preserve us, not only from vast numbers of temptations, with which we are frequently assaulted; but also we shall feel the inestimable happiness of being possessed with a substantial good, and such a durable felicity as can never be destroyed. These things discover the folly of such as expect to enjoy either present or future blessedness, without discharging faithfully the several duties they owe to God and their neighbour; because to act contrary to those laws which the supreme Being has established, is to destroy the design of our creation, and render ourselves unworthy that eminent station in which providence has placed us, by sinking our natures into the low condition of brutes. So that if we would obtain true happiness, or support ourselves in that honourable rank of beings we are in, it must be by strictly observing those rules of reason and conscience, which are as durable as our natures, and determined by the bountiful Author of them, to be a guide and director to all his reasonable creatures, during the longest period of time, and the endless ages of eternity. Therefore, let none propose any inward peace to themselves from sensual gratifications, or the performance of any thing but what is equitable and just; because tranquillity of mind is only

to be had by the exercise of virtue. If men would enjoy a lasting felicity, it must proceed from the exercise of religion, the sense of their maker's favour, and the hopes of being invested with a crown of unperishing glory. The satisfaction arising from the belief and practice of these things, will alleviate the weight of every trouble, and abide by us, when the fervour of the affections shall grow cold and languid, virtue will be a reviving light within, when all is dark and gloomy without.

Were men but universally resolved to obey the command mentioned in the text, the plan of God's moral government would be perfectly restored. The great end of our redemption by Christ entirely answered, and all mankind would live in unity and love, and this world be, what providence intended it to be, a paradise of rational pleasures, and a kingdom of social and benign beings.

I have shewn, that all the real pleasure which is to be had in this life, is by the constant discharge of our duty; and that all the malevolence and want of good will towards one another, must be ascribed to our disregarding that christian precept *of doing as we desire to be done by*. For which reason, let us banish out of our minds acrimony and bitterness of spirit, and bury in oblivion all our party quarrels and debates. If men would but eradicate all those malignant roots of contention, they no longer would dispute so
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vehemently about the externals of religion, but all unite as one man, and strive who shall exert himself most in the cause of internal piety, in the love of God and our neighbour, which is the life and soul, the essence and spirit of all true religion. I speak it with great concern, and do verily believe, if the teachers of the several denominations of christians did less insist on the singular doctrines and peculiar forms of their own sect, and were more ardent in inculcating the plain truths of the gospel, and the observance of universal righteousness and disinterested benevolence, debauchery, and prophaneness would soon decline, and we should quickly see honesty and sincerity abound among us. Therefore, let us not make ritual services equally sacred with God and goodness, extensive mercy and love; because, without the exercise of these amiable and moral virtues, all our pretences to religion are but a fraudulent mask, drawn over the most shameful and flagrant hypocrisy.

Let us not deal deceitfully with God, before whose awful tribunal we shall all be shortly summon'd to appear, or imagine that we can conceal our iniquities from his penetrating eye, which pervades the world, and searches the most private recesses of our souls, or act treacherously with our brethren, but do, in all respects, by them as we would have them do by us; lest some unforeseen stroke from the hand of providence should suddenly

come upon us, and in the midst of our diffimulation, plunge us into a woful eternity.

Let us use all possible means to preserve peace and unanimity in our borders, that we may be kind and affectionate to those, who differ from us in matters of religion, and treat them with the same candour and love, which we desire they should treat us with, were we in their situation; for we are all dependent beings from him that weilds the sceptre to him that swings the flail; all are the children of one common Parent, who has made of one blood all nations of the earth; so that the most considerable creature can no more continue in being than the minutest, independently of God, who is the original of all causes and fountain of all perfection: therefore let us not only adore his goodness for cloathing us with existence, but act suitably to that station in which the wisdom of Providence has placed us; because this will best discover the sense of our dependency on him, and of his power and benignity in our preservation.

If we desire to enjoy the blessings of peace, and continue in the possession of our civil and religious rights, we must abhor and abominate the sin of rebellion, and pay all dutiful allegiance to our gracious sovereign King George, whom the benevolent Father of the universe has in great mercy placed upon the throne of these kingdoms. A prince whose resplendent virtues, and excellent qualities,
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can only be equalled by a few, but are not to be excelled by any, and who has all the justice in his nature that injured innocence can wish for; all the benignity that penitent offenders can implore, but none of that revengeful cruelty which hurries delinquents to judgment, or any of that unseasonable compassion and lenity for the incorrigible, which must necessarily intercept the streams of justice, and hinder them from flowing in the right channel: a prince, who not only takes care to reward his faithful friends, but is also more assiduous in securing the liberties of his people, than in preserving the prerogative of the crown. During his auspicious reign, not one instance can be produced of having acted by despotick authority; but all his proceedings are by the rules of parliament, as being the most sure method to support the subject in his undoubted privileges, and transmit the constitution safe, with all its ancient rights, down to posterity. Therefore, let us give him our hearts and affections, for so long as we stedfastly adhere to his mild and just administration, we can have nothing to fear from him; all the evil that we have to fear, is from our intestine heats and unhappy divisions among ourselves. These are the things which weaken the interest of our friends, strengthen the hands of our enemies, and expose us to the insults of popery and arbitrary power by which means
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we become an easy prey to the wrath of merciless princes: and it must be confessed, with shame too, that the fury of envious priests hath often joined with kings to erect bloody inquisitions, those sacred slaughter-houses, the walls of which are conscious upon what slight occasions fires of martyrdom are kindled, and millions murdered, under pretence of zeal for the glory of God, and an ardent desire to promote the welfare of the pretended catholick church. So that if ever a prince of the *Romish* communion should wear the *British* crown, which God grant that none ever may, the church of *England*, which was always looked upon as the bulwark of the reformation, and a sanctuary to protect distressed protestants, would be the first that must fall a sacrifice to papal cruelty.

In fine, let us make it appear to the whole world, that we are, what we pretend to be, hearty friends to the illustrious house of *Hanover*; that we do believe indeed what we have in the most solemn manner sworn we do believe, that the powers that be, are ordained of God, and that the sole right is in his present majesty, and that there is none in any other person, and this we have declared to be our belief, in the most plain and obvious sense of the words of the oath; upon the faith and belief of a christian.

Let us not, therefore, by any sort of vile
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and monstrous prevarication, make the solemnest ties that the wisdom of man can find out, no ties at all; let us not resist the ordinance of God, but follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; and make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lust thereof; nor allow ourselves in any corrupt or criminal indulgencies: for where sin and iniquity are cherished, or kept alive, there will be perpetual strife and envyings, confusion, and every evil work. Let us study to live quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty. This will form in our minds a due submission to the Divine Will, create the most sincere and friendly harmony among ourselves, and establish the most generous and extensive munificence to one another. When we are thus happily qualified to be useful members of society, then will God Almighty delight to do us good, make us happy in ourselves, great in our king, and we shall be the glorious instruments of establishing in this our island peace and happiness, truth and justice, real religion and undissembled piety, to the latest generations. The observation of the aforesaid duties would have prevented all the miseries and mischiefs that are in the world; and the practising that unexceptionable rule of *doing to others as we would have them do to us*, will procure us peace and tranquility here, and prepare us for those immense regions of
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light in the boundless realms of futurity, where nothing that is false or treacherous, cruel and inhuman, has entered, or ever will enter.

The consideration of these things should make us act agreeably to this divine model, that we may come to God with a heart purified from evil. All who thus come shall find comfort here, be introduced to the pure assembly above, and rest eternally in the spacious realms of glory.

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, inconceivably great and almighty, being the only wise God, be all honour and glory, adoration and praise, through Christ Jesus, for ever and ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

